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Proceedings on the Dedication  
of the Tablet erected by the  
New York Society of the Order  
of the Founders and Patriots of  
America, on the site of Fort  
Amsterdam, at the United  
States Custom House, New  
York City.

September 29th, 1909.

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"Steadfast for God and Country"

Photograph

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# The New York Society

of the

## Order of the Founders and Patriots

of

## America



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### Sub-Committee on Dedication of Tablet

WILLIAM EDWARD FITCH, M.D., <i>Chairman</i>	
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1718

The Society

JUN 23 1911

THIS OUTLINE OF THE FORT'S PLANS  
ON A SCALE OF 12.5 FEET TO THE  
INCH FROM A PLAN OF FORT GEORGE  
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
MADE AT THE REQUEST OF THE  
HONOURABLE JOHN CRIGGIESLOW  
AND THE REST OF THE COMMITTEE  
APPOINTED TO DO IN A SUITABLE  
PLACE FOR ERECTING A  
GOVERNMENT HOUSE IN THIS OFFICE  
APRIL 1722 BY GEORGE HANCOCK

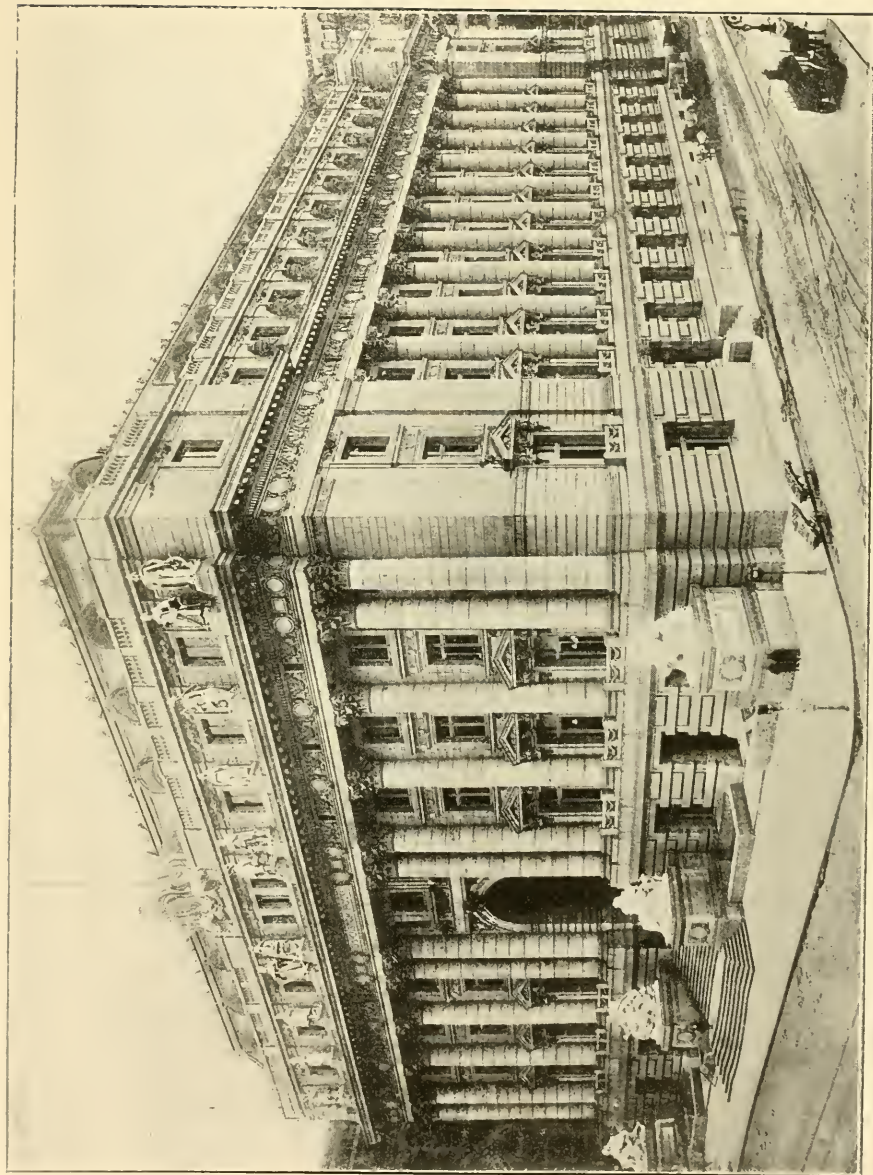
ON THIS SITE  
FORT AMSTERDAM WAS ERECTED 1626  
AND HIS SUCCESSOR  
FORT GEORGE WAS DEMOLISHED 1790  
TO COMMEMORATE THE EXPLORATION  
OF THE HUDSON RIVER  
BY HENRY HUDSON IN SEPTEMBER 1609  
THE FOUNDING OF NEW AMSTERDAM  
MAY 4 1626  
AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF  
AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE 1775-1783  
THIS TABLET IS PLACED BY  
THE NEW YORK SOCIETY OF THE ORDER OF  
THE FOUNDEERS AND PATRIOTS OF AMERICA  
SEPTEMBER 1909

J. E. R. Lamb N. Y.

TABLET ON SITE OF FORT AMSTERDAM, IN UNITED STATES CUSTOM HOUSE







UNITED STATES CUSTOM HOUSE, ON SITE OF FORT AMSTERDAM, NEW YORK CITY





The New York Society of the Order of the Founders and Patriots of America deemed it desirable to commemorate certain important events in the history of our country by erecting a tablet upon the historic site of Fort Amsterdam, whereon the United States Custom House now stands.

The consent of the United States through its Treasury Department, which has custody of the building, was obtained, and the tablet was placed on the central westerly panel of the main stairway leading into the building.

The Hudson-Fulton Celebration Commission ratified the action of the Society and made the dedication of the tablet officially a part of its celebration in 1909.

The tablet is of bronze,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet by  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet in size, made by J. & R. Lamb.

Upon the upper part of the tablet is an outline representing the plan of Fort George, the successor of Fort Amsterdam, enclosing the following inscription in small letters:

This outline of the Fort is made on a scale of 12.5 feet to the inch from "A Plan of Fort George in the City of New York made at the request of the Honourable John Cruger, Esquire and the rest of the committee appointed to fix on a suitable place for building a Government House Made this 12th April 1774 by Gerard Bancker"

In the southwest bastion is the representation of the seal of the Society, and in the southeast bastion the representation of a magnetic compass. Below is the following inscription :

ON THIS SITE  
FORT AMSTERDAM WAS ERECTED 1626  
AND ITS SUCCESSOR  
FORT GEORGE WAS DEMOLISHED 1790  

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TO COMMEMORATE THE EXPLORATION OF  
THE HUDSON RIVER  
BY HENRY HUDSON IN SEPTEMBER 1609  
THE FOUNDING OF NEW AMSTERDAM MAY 4 1626  
AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF  
AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE 1775-1783  
THIS TABLET IS PLACED BY  
THE NEW YORK SOCIETY OF THE ORDER OF THE  
FOUNDERS AND PATRIOTS OF AMERICA  
SEPTEMBER 1909

An historical sketch of Fort Amsterdam by Edward Hagaman Hall, L.H.D., past Governor of our Society, was printed in the programme of the celebration issued by the Hudson-Fulton Celebration Commission, and is reprinted herein. In such programme and also in the circular published by the Society was printed the following :

## “ORDER OF EXERCISES

on dedication of the Society's tablet on the site of Fort Amsterdam at the United States Custom House, on Wednesday, September 29th, 1909, at eleven o'clock.

GEORGE CLINTON BATCHELLER, L.L.D., Governor of the Society, will preside and direct the unveiling of the tablet.

Address by GEN. STEWART L. WOODFORD, former Governor General of the Order, on “The Exploration of the Hudson River by Henry Hudson in September, 1609.”

Address by EDWARD HAGAMAN HALL, L.H.D., former Governor of the Society, on the “Founding of New Amsterdam, May 4, 1626.”

Address by THEODORE FITCH, former Governor of the Society, on “The Establishment of American Independence, 1775-1783.”

Address by MAJ-GEN. FREDERICK DENT GRANT, U. S. A., former Governor General of the Order and Governor of the Society, on presentation of the tablet to the United States.

Address by HON. WILLIAM LOEB, JR., Collector of the Port of New York, on accepting the custody of the tablet in behalf of the United States authorities.

Prayer by REV. EDWARD PAYSON JOHNSON, D.D., Chaplain of the Society.

There will be patriotic music between the addresses.

Immediately after the presentation a salute of thirteen guns will be fired from Fort Jay, on Governor's Island.

American Continentals, COL. HENRY D. TYLER, Commandant, and the Minute Men under command of MAJOR E. J. PAULL, in Continental uniform, will participate in the exercises as a Guard of Honor.”

Gen. Woodford, the President of the Hudson-Fulton Celebration Commission, in the multiplicity of duties devolving upon him during the celebration, was to his and our regret unable to meet this appointment, and Edward Hagaman Hall, L.H.D. Assistant-Secretary of the Commission and past Governor of the Society, consented to make the address upon the subject assigned to Gen. Woodford.

Major-General Frederick Dent Grant, U. S. A., received orders from the War Department a few hours before the dedication to report at Washington on that day, which prevented him from being present, and his place was filled by Col. Ralph E. Prime, D.C.L., L. L. D., past Governor of the Society and past Governor General of the Order, who presented the tablet to the United States.

About fifty Iroquois Indians, guests of the Commission, were present at the dedication. Dressed in their native costume, they were drawn up in a hollow square in front of the entrance to the Custom House, presenting a picturesque foreground.

It was a vivid reminder of the Colonial and Revolutionary periods in which their ancestors were participants. During the exercises they gave some interesting symbolic dances and tribal songs, and William Crow, one of their number, eighty-nine years of age, delivered a spirited speech in his native language.

Before and between the addresses the band played patriotic airs.

Many associates of our Order were present, and there was a large assemblage of guests and the public at the exercises.

The following is a report of the proceedings at the dedication of the tablet:

Governor GEORGE CLINTON BATCHELLER, LL.D. :

Associates, Ladies and Gentlemen: The longer I live, the more I am convinced, that history is simply and only and always his-story—the story of a man, a man who knew how to do things—and did them.

In passing through this city, within the last few days, I stood by Grant's Tomb on the Hudson, so that Hudson and Grant are now inseparable in my thought.

I saw the thirteen trees that Alexander Hamilton planted, and his tomb in Trinity Churchyard. I looked on statue after statue, of Washington and Lafayette, of Seward and Lincoln, of

Franklin and Ericson, and many others that grace our parks and open places. In front of St. Paul's I saw the marble slab that tells the story of Montgomery, and, just across the way, a tablet that records the birth of the first white child on this island. Turning the dusty pages of the yesterdays of life, we read that a few old guns gave the name of "Battery," to the lower end of Broadway. Around the corner, still called Bowling Green, the lusty Dutchman played tenpins. Golf and tennis, baseball and cricket, are our recreations today. A fence running from old Trinity to the East River, was built to keep the negroes in, and the Indians out, and we call it Wall Street to this day.

The population of our entire country, in those olden times, did not equal one-fourth the number of people in New York State today—and who will dare to prophesy the future of our country one hundred years from now? This building, massive and magnificent as it is, may not be here, but this tablet will remain to tell the wholesome and heroic story of Henry Hudson's life. We are the heirs of all the ages; and all the ages, yet unborn, are to be our heirs. God buries his workmen, but the work goes on.

Three hundred years ago, and we are living in the days of Good Queen Bess, of Shakespeare, Rare Ben Jonson, Milton and Bacon.

Another hundred years, and the century finds us shaking hands with old Ben Franklin, John Hancock, Thomas Jefferson, and George Washington.

The hundred years just come and gone, have been eventful in that we have become a great nation, and the century is full of Tennyson and Carlyle, of Emerson and Cooper, of Macaulay and Motley, of Dickens and Thackeray and Longfellow.

"Until the dead alone seem living,  
And the living alone seem dead."

I grow reminiscent, and reluctantly relinquish memory, but the programme defines my position and limits my time.

Before I proceed further I would say that I am sure you will agree with me in my regrets that owing to the great burden and various functions that press so heavily upon General Stewart L. Woodford, President of The Hudson-Fulton Celebration Commission, it will be impossible for him to be with us and take part in the exercises this morning. General Woodford desires that I express for him his regrets.

I am highly honored and proud of the duty I have to perform in presenting to you Dr. Edward Hagaman Hall, formerly Governor of this Society, my friend and predecessor, who will now address to you a few remarks on the exploration of the Hudson River by Henry Hudson, in September, 1609, and the founding of New Amsterdam, May 4th, 1626. (Applause.)

Dr. EDWARD HAGAMAN HALL :

Mr. Governor, Associates, Ladies and Gentlemen : We meet here today to commemorate, by this enduring bronze, three important events in the history of our City, State and Nation ; the first exploration of our queenly river by Henry Hudson, the founding of our imperial city by the Dutch, and the achievement of our national independence. Of the first two events it is my pleasurable duty briefly to speak.

In these days of conflicting claims by rival explorers it may not be amiss, on this occasion, to say a word concerning Hudson's title to fame as the first European explorer of the river which bears his name. A few days ago ground was broken in Battery Park for a monument to Verrazzano, who entered our harbor in 1524. We should feel indebted to our French and Italian citizens for their enterprise in erecting that monument, for it serves to emphasize the wide difference between the achievement of the Italian navigator who sailed under French auspices, and that of the English navigator who sailed under the Dutch. Verrazzano entered New York harbor but did not explore the river, and no beneficial results ensued from his brief stay. Henry Hudson explored the river to the head of navigation, made its resources known to the world, opened it up to civilization, and made his knowledge useful to mankind.

Among the many proofs that Hudson was the first European thoroughly to explore the river, there is one convincing fact which may be stated in a few words. The declared object of the great navigator's voyage of 1609 was to find a passage to the Orient by the northeast or the northwest. When baffled by the Arctic ice, he deliberately turned his prow westward to seek a passage to the western sea which was believed to exist in the latitude of 40 degrees, and he entered our river in the firm belief, based on guesswork maps of the period and the hearsay advice of Captain John Smith, that it led to the western sea.

Now, through his association with the English Muscovy Company, and with that group of famous geographers who made Amsterdam at that time the center of geographical knowledge, Hudson was conversant with all the discoveries of English and Continental navigators prior to that time. If, therefore, any European had previously explored the river, Hudson would have known that it did not lead to the Orient, and he never would have entered it. The very fact that Hudson explored our river under the circumstances, is indubitable proof of the priority of his exploration, to which might be added other evidences too numerous to mention on this occasion.

We honor Hudson's memory today for two reasons : First, he has given us a noble example of courage of conviction which is the basis of all right living. He had not only physical courage to brave great and unknown dangers, but he had also the moral courage to maintain his convictions, even in the face of death. No soldier upon the battlefield, no martyr at the stake, has ever been glorified by a more heroic end than that of the great navigator, who, because he would not yield his beliefs and convictions to a mutinous crew, was set adrift in the dreary waste of Hudson's Bay, to perish by the slow tortures of freezing or starvation. Our first debt to Hudson, then, is for his example.

Our second debt is a material one. He is a benefactor of his race who makes the lives of his fellowmen more worth living. Hudson opened up to civilization a land of which he said : "It is as pleasant a land as one need tread upon. The land is the finest for cultivation that I ever in my life set foot upon." This land has since become a land of peaceful industry and happy homes. A great and prosperous people now inhabit it, and the world is happier and better for the civilization that has grown up within these once savage borders. Truly, Henry Hudson was a benefactor. Truly we owe his memory a great debt of gratitude.

Our tablet commemorates next the founding of New Amsterdam. When Rome and Athens were hoary with age, when London Tower was moss-grown and lichen-covered, and when the origins of the capitals of the Orient were lost in the myths of mythology, New York was yet unborn ; and the islands which gem our waters were yet in their native beauty as in the day of Creation. The industrious beaver built his dam in the



neighboring brook now covered by the dry pavements of Beaver Street. The native wild men drew up their canoes on the neighboring shores. Then came the magic working voyage of Hudson; and close after him the industrious but transient traders, and then, less than 300 years ago, came that little band of Dutch pioneers who on this spot erected the first permanent structure on Manhattan Island—Fort Amsterdam. Within the four walls of that little fortress, the Metropolis of the West was born. We stand therefore at the cradle of our beloved city. We stand at a sacred place. The little princess, born here of the free blood of the Dutch republic has grown to be the Queen of the West. She sits on her throne. She opens her shining gates to the rising sun. The argosies of the world bear their treasures to her feet, the people of all nations gather within the borders of her benignant hospitality. Her domain has become "the crowning city," whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honorable of the earth.

O city of our home, as we stand here at the place of thy nativity, in this great festival of our happiness, and reverently dedicate this tablet in memory of thy birth, we dedicate ourselves to thee in loving and loyal devotion.

"Our hearts, our hopes are all with thee;  
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,  
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,  
Are all with thee—are all with thee."

(Prolonged Applause.)

Governor BATCHELLER:

It gives me great pleasure to have the honor to introduce to you Theodore Fitch, former Governor of this Society, who will address you on the subject of "The Establishment of American Independence, 1775-1783." (Applause.)

THEODORE FITCH:

Mr. Governor, Associates, Ladies and Gentlemen: On the 9th of July, 1776, New York received news that Congress had adopted the Declaration of Independence by the vote of twelve of the Colonies, New York not voting as her delegates had not received instructions. On the evening of the same day by order of Washington, it was read before every brigade of his army then stationed in New York. The news was received with enthusiasm, and the leaden statue of George III, which stood directly in front of this spot only a few feet distant, was pulled down.



In a general order issued the next day Washington condemned the act as riotous, but nevertheless the statue was down, and some of the fragments were afterwards melted into bullets for the patriots to use against the British.

The Convention of New York in session at White Plains on the 10th of July, 1776, ratified the Declaration of Independence and instructed their delegates in Congress to vote for it. The Thirteen Colonies were now a unit in the struggle for independence.

In the summer of 1776 Fort George witnessed a sad spectacle. It looked on Staten Island on which Gen. Howe's army of 25,000 men was encamped. It saw Lord Howe's powerful fleet in the harbor. It saw 20,000 British troops carried across the Bay and landed at Gravesend on their march to capture Washington's army. It looked on Brooklyn Heights where Washington was entrenched with 8,000 men, while Stirling and Sullivan with 5,000 raw recruits a little further down awaited the attack of Howe's veterans.

It was the 27th of August, 1776. Howe had routed Stirling and Sullivan after desperate fighting. The disastrous battle of Long Island had been fought.

Howe moved up his army to besiege Washington at Brooklyn Heights, confident, with his superiority of forces and command of the water, that Washington with his army, then of 10,000 men, there entrenched, could not escape.

On the night of the 29th by a most masterly retreat in the darkness and fog, without alarming the enemy, Washington brought his entire army safely across the river, and foiled Howe's plan to capture his army, which, if successful, would doubtless have ended the war then and there.

Fort George, which was garrisoned by British troops from the 15th day of September, 1776, when Gen. Howe took possession of New York City, until the 25th day of November, 1783, witnessed other momentous scenes.

On the day it witnessed the evacuation of British troops from the City of New York and the end of British dominion over the Thirteen Colonies.

Before leaving, the British soldiers nailed their colors to the staff in the fort, knocked off the cleats and greased the pole to prevent the unfurling of the American flag. But the attempt was futile. John Van Arsdale nailed on the cleats, sanded the

greased pole, ascended the flag-staff, tore down the British colors and raised the Stars and Stripes which floated from the Fort before the British fleet had left the lower bay.

The American army took possession; and, from Fort George, Washington reviewed his troops on the same day.

Only a short distance from the fort at Fraunces' Tavern on the 4th of December, 1783, Washington delivered his farewell to his officers, walked to Whitehall and took a barge to Paulus Hook, on his way to Annapolis to surrender his commission to the Continental Congress.

The brief period assigned for my remarks prevents any extended history of the American Revolution.

From the battle of Lexington, on the 19th of April, 1775, when untrained minute-men defeated British veterans and drove them in panic to the shelter of their entrenchments, to the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, on the 19th of October, 1781, the story of American valor is written in living letters.

What memories of heroic conflict are associated with the names Bunker Hill, Fort Washington, Trenton, Princeton, Ticonderoga, Bennington, Oriskany, Brandywine, Bemis Heights, Monmouth, Stony Point, King's Mountain, Cowpens, Guilford, Eutaw Springs? What recollections of privations are evoked by the mention of Valley Forge, and of suffering and martyrdom by the name of the prison ship "Jersey" anchored in the Wallabout just across the river, and the Provost Prison in the City Hall Park under the jailor Cunningham?

Among the generals who contributed much to the establishment of American independence, and whose names are on "Fame's eternal bead-roll worthy to be filed," I will mention merely Greene, Lafayette, Steuben, Stirling, Sullivan, Schuyler, Montgomery, Morgan, Putnam, Herkimer, Wayne, Marion, Sumter, Kosciusko and the first admiral of our navy, the heroic John Paul Jones.

We honor the private soldiers who fought the battles of the Revolution, actuated by the purest patriotism. They were without adequate pay, poorly fed, insufficiently clothed and equipped, but they were patriots who fought for liberty and country.

But the man of all others who was instrumental in establishing American independence was Washington.

His patriotism was unsullied. His military ability and generalship was of the highest order. He was superior to the petty jealousies and intrigues of Lee, Gates, Mifflin, Wilkinson and Conway. He patiently obeyed the orders of an inefficient and vacillating Congress and finally prevailed upon it to adopt a right policy. He quieted the murmurs of an ill-fed and poorly equipped army, healed the dissensions and bickerings of a militia which had all the jealousies and independence of restraint which characterized the sections from which they came, prevailed on them to renew their short terms of enlistment, sustained their courage in defeat, and welded untrained militiamen into an army of seasoned veterans. With an inferior force, he was always confronted with the problem how to outwit, baffle and capture a superior army.

He succeeded in defeating the various plans of campaign of the enemy, such as that for the capture of his army before his retreat from Long Island to White Plains, across New Jersey and to the entrenchments at Morristown, also the plans to separate New England from New York and the other Colonies, and the possession of the Hudson and the Mohawk Valleys, and the capture and separation of the Southern Colonies. Especially do we honor him for the skillful plan arranged with Rochambeau, and the wonderful strategy with which he completely deceived Clinton and left him unsuspecting at New York until too late, while he swiftly marched his army from Westchester County four hundred miles to join the French fleet and army awaiting him at Yorktown and capture Cornwallis and his army of eight thousand men and end the war.

De Grasse, Rochambeau and Lafayette did their part well, and Cornwallis, unable to defend himself longer, sent his flag of truce to propose capitulation on the 17th of October, 1781, exactly four years to a day from the surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga, which is named by Creasy among the fifteen decisive battles of the world. The surrender of Cornwallis was on the 19th of October, 1781, and there was practically no more fighting between the regular forces.

When the patriots fired their muskets at Lexington it was not for separation from England, although it was armed rebellion. Very few then thought of anything but the redress of grievances, and to remedy the abuses to which the Colonies had been subjected by George III. Their efforts were to establish

a policy of toleration and proper protection of their interests, and recognition of their rights as English subjects. No taxation without representation was the chief demand. But events moved rapidly, and the people soon became convinced that independence was necessary to preserve their self government, and the Declaration of Independence followed. Thenceforward the war was fought for independence. Rebellion had become revolution, and the revolution was justified by success. After independence had been won, the Thirteen Colonies under the Articles of Confederation were a league of independent states bound together with a rope of sand, without national power or authority, and it was not until the adoption of the Constitution which became operative in 1789, that the United States became in reality a nation strong and powerful as well as independent.

Today we welcome all the nations represented at the Hudson-Fulton Celebration. Among them we greet the Netherlands which sent the "Half Moon" to these waters three hundred years ago, and which established on Manhattan Island civil and religious liberty and toleration.

We welcome Germany which sent to aid us in the Revolution that trained soldier Baron von Steuben, who rendered such efficient service in drilling our raw recruits and making our army fit to cope with the veterans opposed to it.

We welcome France, our ally in the Revolution, whose fleet and army co-operating at Yorktown made the surrender of Cornwallis a necessity, and whose battleships fitly named Justice, Truth and Liberty, have now come to do us honor.

But especially, now that the resentment and bitterness of the Revolutionary struggle have faded away, do we welcome England to our celebration, and her fleet again in our harbor with the Inflexible commanded by Admiral Seymour leading her powerful battleships, and coming not as our foe but our friend and honored guest.

As Founders and Patriots most of our Order descend from the original English colonists, and we are proud of English institutions and English laws, of her language and literature, which are our common heritage. All of the glorious history of England before her colonists settled in this country is ours, and as Americans of English descent we glory in all of it that an Englishman can glory in.

The standards of our Order are two—one is the American Flag, the other is the Cross of St. George, the red cross on the white ground surmounted, however, by thirteen blue stars, and both command our admiration and regard. We wear with pride as the insignia of our Order the button which represents the Cross of St. George.

England's glory, with all that it represents, is ours, and as American citizens we rejoice that we are kinsmen whose sympathies and aspirations are in accord, and that the destinies of the United States and of England appear now to be linked together to enhance the welfare and happiness of millions of the English-speaking people, and for the benefit of the entire Anglo-Saxon race, and the advance of civilization. (Applause.)

Governor BATCHELLER :

Ladies and Gentlemen : We have here a unique assemblage of aborigines, natives of this State. Dr. Hall will tell us what their ceremony consists of. He is well versed in the history of the Indians.

Dr. EDWARD HAGAMAN HALL :

Mr. Governor, Ladies and Gentlemen : The Indians who are here with us are real Indians ; they are not white people painted up for this occasion. They represent the real "first families of New York." They are the descendants of the Iroquois Indians, or the Five Nations, sometimes called the Six Nations when there were six nations. They are now going to give you one of their ceremonial songs and one of their ceremonial dances ; and I wish to say to you, so you may appreciate what they are doing, that this is not a show.

They have been brought here by Mr. Moore for the Hudson-Fulton Celebration Commission, with the idea that we are celebrating a great ceremony in honor of the birth of this city. They have therefore come here, not as a side-show, but in a religious spirit to a great and wholesome celebration. They have been brought here to live part of their lives over again. Their ancestors were the controllers of the Indians who lived on these islands. Their ancestors gathered here before the Fort and were in the Fort to make treaties. Therefore, for 300 years their descendants have been on this spot. As I have said, they are here, not as an exhibition or as a show, but to repeat some of their ceremonial which has been handed down to them.

They are going to give a song called "The Prairie Song" and a ceremonial dance called the "Feather Dance."

(Ceremonies by the Indians.)

Dr. HALL :

That dance has never before been given outside the reservation on which those Indians live.

The oldest Indian here is William Crow, who is 89 years old, whom I have the honor now of introducing to you. (Applause.)

William Crow spoke in his native language clearly and emphatically for about five minutes, a small portion of his address being translated into English as follows :

Ladies and Gentlemen: I am glad to be here with you on this occasion. I am glad to see so many people here to see us, this small band of Indians left here to be in this celebration. We leave it all to the Great Spirit, to our Great Father, that we should live happily henceforth together. That is all we have to say; and I thank the gathering for your kind attention. (Applause.)

Governor BATCHELLER, after directing the unveiling of the tablet, said :

Late yesterday afternoon I received a despatch from Major-General Frederick D. Grant, of the United States Army, that he has been called unexpectedly to Washington, D. C., and expressing his regret that he could not be present to present this tablet to the United States. But I am happy to say we have with us this morning a veteran, the founder of this Order, a man who is always ready at a moment's call, our Past-Governor and Past-Governor-General. I take pleasure in introducing to you Col. Ralph Earl Prime.

Col. RALPH EARL PRIME, D.C.L., LL.D. :

Mr. Governor, Associates, Ladies and Gentlemen : We are met here today to unveil a tablet which shall last when we, like all our ancestors, have passed away. It shall tell to future generations and the children that shall succeed us in our places, the story of these events referred to today.

It has occurred to me that it is exceedingly fit that this part of the function should be at the hands of the Society which we



represent, a Society which, alone of all the American patriotic societies, takes up all of these events which relate to the history of our city and our country; and all of our associates claim their eligibility through descent from men who have participated in all of it.

In the midst of these festivities, it has seemed to me fit also that we should not forget the Providence that has run through all of the events which are celebrated here today, and which are memorialized in this tablet. They do not go back any of them to the beginning of America. Columbus far earlier in his exploration and discovery, never outstretched to the settlement of the City of New York, and the discovery of the Hudson River, yet there marched along our shores a Greater Sentinel than ever guarded camp, for the Almighty kept off the discoverer from these shores until He had prepared a people for it, whose descendants have since garrisoned it and made it what it is; until the Puritans of England, the Huguenots of France, the Walloons of Flanders and the Dutch of Holland, had been educated in the furnace of the adversity which came upon them, to make hardy men and women who should found this land for us, their descendants. We have gathered, I say to unveil this tablet. And now, Mr. Governor, as representing the New York Society of the Order of the Founders and Patriots of America, and in your name, we commit to the keeping of the Government of our great country, this bronze tablet which shall endure when we have passed away. (Applause.)

The United States fired a salute of thirteen guns from Fort Jay at Governors Island.

Governor BATCHELLER :

Associates, Ladies and Gentlemen : Our next speaker is a gentleman too well known for me to elaborate my remarks. He is known throughout our land. You will now hear from New York's Collector of the Port, and I have the distinguished honor of introducing to you Hon. William Loeb, Jr. (Applause.)

Hon. WILLIAM LOEB, Jr. (Collector of the Port of New York):

Governor Batcheller, Members of the Order of the Founders and Patriots of America :—As custodian of this building which is so intimately connected with the commerce of the country, and for the development of which, Hudson, by his exploration,



and Fulton, by his invention, so largely contributed, I take pleasure, on behalf of the Government, in accepting the custody of this Tablet, and I congratulate the members of the Order of the Founders and Patriots of America upon the important work which they are doing for the country and posterity in marking historic sites such as this upon which we are assembled, and in commemorating events such as these we now are celebrating. (Applause.)

Governor BATCHELLER :

The closing exercises will be a benediction pronounced by the Rev. Edward Payson Johnson, D.D., the chaplain of this Society.

Rev. EDWARD PAYSON JOHNSON, D.D.:

God of our fathers! Who brought them safely across vast unknown seas, and delivered them from great perils and savage foes:—Who established them graciously in this goodly land, and in the time of oppression, invasion and treachery raised up for them faithful friends, and gave them victory and national freedom;—surely Thou hadst a favor, a merciful favor, unto our fathers, O Mighty King of Heaven and Earth! We therefore glorify Thee, and give thanks to Thee, for Thy wondrous and long-continued grace to them; and also for their changeless faith in Thy guardianship and guidance; for their devout reverence for Thy Holy word and Thy Holy Son; and for their sincere endeavor always to do the right. We glorify Thee for their sturdy virtues and fidelities. We rejoice that we are the sons of such sires.

Yet, O God Most Holy! strengthen us that we may not merely glory in our ancestry and our inheritance; but may also conscientiously and continually honor them! Deliver us utterly from the curse of the intolerant spirit. Preserve us wholly from the worldliness that measures man's value by his earthly goods, and contends that one's life doth consist in things he possesseth.

Increase in us more and more the self-control and calm fearlessness, the gracious goodness and gentle humanities which we so unaffectedly admire in Thy Dear Son Jesus. Help us, O God, to be persistently eager and passionately loyal in following after the things which are true, and honest and of good report.

Strengthen us steadfastly to long and labor for nothing less than bringing to all our Land, and all the earth, the Golden Age of Heaven, with its brightness and joy, its peace and purity. Bless us, O Holy God, in making us each one a blessing to all mankind. And to Thy name, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we will ascribe the honor, the glory, the praise and the power, world without end. Amen.

Governor BATCHELLER :

There will be another ceremonial dance by the Indians before we separate.

(Ceremonial dance by Indians.)

## FORT AMSTERDAM.

Historical Sketch by Edward Hagaman Hall, L.H.D.

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The site of the United States Custom House at the foot of Broadway possesses the unique distinction of being the Cradle of the Metropolis. When Peter Minuit, the first Director-General of New Netherland, arrived in 1626 and planted the first permanent colony on Manhattan Island, the first concern of the Dutch pioneers was to stake out a fort, under the direction of Kryn Frederick, an engineer sent along for this purpose. This fort—probably the first permanent structure raised on the island—was originally a blockhouse surrounded by palisades. It was located within the area bounded by Bowling Green, State, Bridge and Whitehall Streets, and was named Fort Amsterdam.

At that time it stood on the water front, the original water line coming down the west side of the Island approximately along the line of Greenwich Street, then bending southeastward across the corner of Bridge and State Streets, and thence following the southern and eastern sides of the Island along the line of Pearl Street. Battery Park, therefore, is all made land, or "gedempte," as the Dutch would say.

In 1633 Director-General Wouter Van Twiller began a new fort on a larger scale. It was about 300 feet long by 250 feet wide, required two years to construct, and cost 4,172 guilders. It was four-square, with a bastion at each corner. In 1642 an imposing two storied stone church was built within the fort. For many years the fort was the seat of government, the harbor of refuge and the place of worship, and the history of New Netherland and of Colonial New York could be written very fully from the events connected with this site.

With almost every change of dynasty the fort took a new name. When the English captured it in 1664 it was named Fort James. When the Dutch recaptured it in 1673 it was named Fort William Henry. In 1674, with the English again in possession, it was called Fort James again. In 1689, when James fled the throne and William and Mary ascended it, the Colonists, with delightful adaptability to circumstances and loyalty to the reigning monarch, promptly named it Fort William. In 1702, when good Queen Anne mounted the throne, the Colonists zealously attested their loyalty to her by giving it the name of Fort

Anne. So it remained until the Queen died in 1714 and George I. was proclaimed King, whereupon the fort was promptly rechristened Fort George. During the reigns of the three successive Georges the name of the fort remained unchanged.

Meanwhile the fort had been strengthened and reinforced by a battery extending in a semi-circle along the water from what is now the corner of Greenwich Street and Battery Place to about the corner of Whitehall and Water Streets. The full complement of the fort and battery was 120 guns.

For many years the fort was the seat of government over a wide region. In the days of New Netherland its jurisdiction reached from the Connecticut River on the east to the Delaware River on the west and south. In the days of Colonial New York its jurisdiction, overleaping intermediate New England, extended as far as Pemaquid, Maine, where there was a fort maintained from Fort George as a base.

For over 150 years the fort, under its various names, was the ceremonial center of the colony. Here the Indians gathered in all their barbaric picturesqueness to negotiate treaties with the white men. When the governors of New Netherland and New York were imported, and not homemade as now, this was their formal reception place and residence, and here one ceremony followed another, increasing in stateliness and splendor as the colony grew and the ornaments of government increased. Hither yearly upon the King's birthday the city officials "in their formalities" and the leading citizens repaired to drink the King's health amid salvos of artillery; and at other times, when the Colonists were less cordially disposed toward the Government, some of the most exciting incidents in the city's history were enacted under the frowning walls of the old fort. At last, when the British evacuated the city in 1783, Washington reviewed the triumphal American procession from the fort's dilapidated walls.

In 1790 the fort was demolished to make room for a Government House, which was intended for a Presidential Mansion. The removal of the National Capital from New York, however, relegated the structure to the uses of a Gubernatorial residence; and when New York lost the honor of being the State Capital the building was used as a custom house. Between that Custom House and the present Custom House one or two generations of commercial buildings have intervened.

## Publications of the New York Society of the Order of the Founders and Patriots of America

1. **"The Settlement of New York,"** by George Rogers Howell, March 18, 1897.
2. **"The Battle of Lexington,"** by Hon. John Winslow, May 13, 1897.
3. **"George Clinton,"** by Col. R. E. Prime, December 15, 1902.
4. **"Washington, Lincoln and Grant,"** by Gen. James Grant Wilson, April 6, 1903.
5. **"Early New York,"** by Hon. Robert B. Roosevelt, January 15, 1904.
6. **"Thomas Hooker, The First American Democrat,"** by Walter Seth Logan, February 19, 1904.
7. **"Early Long Island,"** by Hon. Wm. Winton Goodrich, March 16, 1904.
8. **"Banquet Addresses,"** May 13, 1904.
9. **"The Philippines and The Filipinos,"** by Maj. Geo. Frederick D. Grant, December 10, 1904.
10. **"Some Social Theories of the Revolution,"** by Theodore Gilman, January 31, 1905.
11. **"Banquet Addresses,"** May 13, 1905.
12. **"The Story of the Pequot War,"** by Thos. Egleston, LL.D., Ph. D., December 15, 1905.
13. **"Distinctive Traits of a Dutchman,"** by Col. John W. Vrooman, February 23, 1906.
14. **"An Incident of the Alabama Claims Arbitration,"** by Col. Ralph E. Prime, March 23, 1906.
15. **"Banquet Addresses and Memoir of Hon. Robert B. Roosevelt,"** May 14, 1906.
16. **"Constitution, By-Laws and Regulations of the Order, and List of Members of the General Court, with By-Laws and List of Members of the New York Society,"** November 1, 1906.
17. **"Some Municipal Problems that Vexed the Founders,"** by Rev. Wm. Reed Eastman, December 14, 1906.
18. **"A Vanished Race of Aboriginal Founders,"** by Brig. Gen'l Henry Stuart Turrill, U. S. A., February 14, 1907.
19. **"List of Officers and Members of the New York Society,"** November 15, 1907.
20. **"The Hudson Valley in the Revolution,"** by Francis Whiting Halsey, December 13, 1907.
21. **"American Territory in Turkey; or, Admiral Farragut's Visit to Constantinople and the Extra-territoriality of Robert College,"** by Ralph E. Prime, LL.D., D. C. L., February 14, 1908.
22. **"Banquet Addresses,"** May 13, 1908.
23. **"Some Things the Colony of North Carolina Did and Did First in the Founding of English-Speaking America,"** by William Edward Fitch, M. D., December 11, 1908.
24. **"Colonial Legends and Folk Lore,"** by Hon. John C. Coleman, January 20, 1910.
25. **"The Origin, Rise and Downfall of the State of Franklin, Under Her First and Only Governor—John Sevier,"** by William Edward Fitch, M. D., March 11, 1910.
26. **"Proceedings on the Dedication of the Tablet Erected by the New York Society of the Order of the Founders and Patriots of America, on the Site of Fort Amsterdam at the United States Custom House, New York City,"** September 29, 1909.

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